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## Pandemic Policy Preparedness: Unintentional Student Discrimination in the Wake of COVID-19

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## **Pandemic Policy Preparedness**

Educational leadership requires a set of skills and practices that are shaped by professional ethics. Professional ethics are the dynamics of both personal and professional ethics and requires educational leaders to understand how these ethical codes drive interactions and decisions especially in controversy or difficult situations (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016).

Anderson (2014) argued that educational leaders may not have the deeper understanding of social justice necessary to “better scholarship, but also to better practice” (p. x) due to the current expectations of leaders including increasing test scores and accountability ratings and addressing social and emotional learning.

Adding to the current expectations of school leaders are unparalleled situations such as coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), a fast spreading, communicable disease. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic and with growing cases in the United States, unprecedented closures resulted. The U. S. Department of Education (2020) communicated that even during this time, districts must be “mindful of the requirements of Section 504, Title II, and Title VI, to ensure that all students are able to study and learn in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination” (p. 1). Legislative policy was also enacted as a result of the health crisis. March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act is signed into law, providing an economic relief plan and educational provisions.

In the State of Texas, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) began meeting with district superintendents as early as March 14, 2020. During this time, TEA had answers to address child nutrition needs through funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), but was unable to address a myriad of questions about equitable instruction, specifically for Special

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Education. However, under the provision of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Local Education Agencies (LEA) must provide the same educational opportunities for students with disabilities for any time in which educational opportunities are available to the general population. On April 3, 2020, TEA continues to provide resources related to Section 504, evaluation, ARD committees, and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) considerations (TEA, 2020).

Locally, many school districts started at-home instruction in some capacity in mid-March. In the light of indefinite school closures, weaknesses in local school board policies in the State of Texas to cover such “other calamities [that] have caused the closing of schools” (EB (LEGAL), 2019, p. 1) have impacted equitable instruction. Therefore, changes to FB (LEGAL) and FB (LOCAL) Equal Education Opportunity are warranted.

### **Rationale**

Indefinite school closures have left some school districts unprepared to manage the necessary provisions to provide an equitable education for all students. As learning hubs were launched for at-home learning guided by parents and students, accommodations for English Learners (EL), students with disabilities, and students receiving Special Education services were not on the forefront of the design in every district, potentially providing larger gaps in learning. The launch of online at-home learning also requires internet access and devices to access the learning, providing another potential inequitable gap, especially in low socio-economic households. An assumption was that all households had parents at-home during this time to assist in learning as they may be working from home, or not at home, or not capable of assisting with the level of instruction their child requires.

The need to understand how such a pandemic closure impacts the teaching and learning of all students is essential to policy change. Anderson (2014) advocated for a deeper understanding of “interdisciplinary scholarship” that “help[s] us act more effectively in a world that is changing rapidly” (p. xi). Carlisle, Jackson, and George’s (2006) study concluded five components of social justice in education: (a) inclusion and equity, (b) high expectations, (c) reciprocal community relationships, (d), system-wide approach, and (e) direct social justice education and intervention (as cited in Rodriguez-Kiino & Peterson, 2014). Also, the five components of social justice in education in their study promoted students at the center of the social justice framework; a similar construct to Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2016) framework for ethic of profession. The five components of social justice should be “central to equity-minded policies and practices” (Rodriguez-Kiino & Peterson, 2014, p. 97) and should be the work of all stakeholders in education.

### **Policy Description**

The Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA) of 1974 is federal legislation that prohibits discrimination against faculty, staff, and students. EEOA requires school districts to overcome learning obstacles for students in order to provide an equitable education. FB(LEGAL) and FB(LOCAL) are grounded in this federal legislation. FB(LOCAL) specifies the necessary requirement for “services and supports to provide students equal access to educational opportunities” (2016, p. 1). FB(LEGAL) Equal Education Opportunity has 7 major components: (a) nondiscrimination (b) federal funding recipients (c) students with learning difficulties (d) disability discrimination (e) children who are homeless (f) religious freedom, and (g) discrimination on basis of sex. For this evaluation, only two sections will be evaluated for policy

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changes driven by the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

For the component of students with learning difficulties, policy stipulates that the Texas Education Agency was to set forth the school districts requirements for providing learning assistance to students with learning difficulties, including Special Education services, but that parents receive written notification of those services. The component for policy change, disability discrimination, outlines the definitions of who is considered qualified as an individual with a disability and the district's responsibility to make reasonable modifications to avoid discrimination.

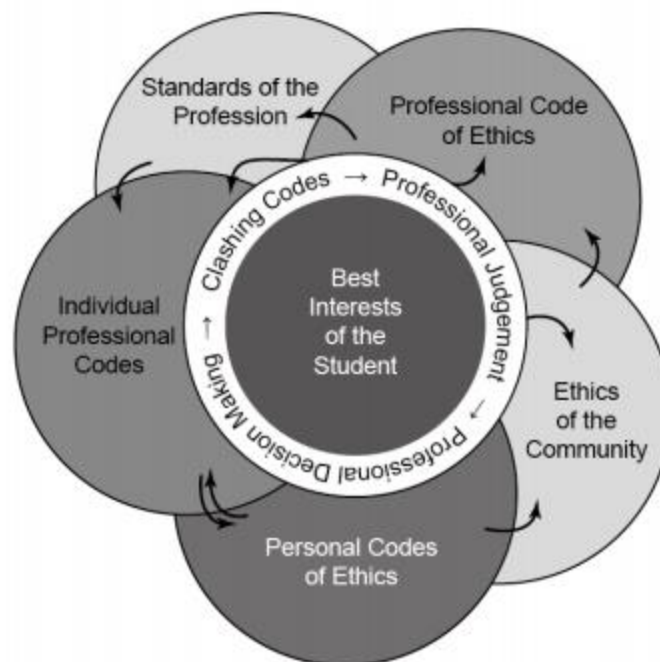
In addition to state and local policy, recent legislative policy may potentially impact the educational outcome of students. The CARES Act (2020) is more than just an economic stimulus package. The legislation allows for educational actions to benefit districts moving to at-home learning, such as waivers to accountability and testing under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and for limits to be removed on funds spent on technology. However, the act also allows for the U. S. Department of Education (ED) to submit a report of waivers that may be necessary to help educational institutions comply with IDEA. These waivers are not in the best interest to serve the educational outcomes of all students. The National Center for Learning Disabilities (2020) advocated for additional considerations because the CARES Act had “no funding to close the ‘homework gap’ and provide students with internet access or equipment at home” (NCLD, 2020).

### **Ethical Framework**

Professional ethics incorporates the three connected perspectives of ethics of care, ethic of justice, and ethic of critique (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016; Starratt, 1991). Each of these ethics

provide a “perspective” that allows for decisions to be made in the best balance of students’ rights (Starratt, 1991). The ethic of critique is “based on critical theory” and should require leadership to be introspective of “our concepts such as privilege, power, culture, language, and even justice” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016, p. 14). Ethic of care may focus on equity and cultural responsiveness, while ethic of justice is often seen as particular policies or expectations from the profession or community (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016; Starratt, 1991).

Personal ethics are “based on life stories and critical incidents” while professional ethics are “based on experiences and expectations of their working lives” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016, p. 23). The ethic of profession is a dynamic interaction of ethical principals and codes of ethics within a social justice paradigm (Figure 1).



*Figure 1.* Ethic of profession. This graphic illustrates the complexity of the ethic of profession that includes the five major factors that influence decision making in the best interest of students (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016, p. 26).

Educational leaders should focus on the rights and responsibilities that enable student success but are often faced with conflicting ethics, such as an individual’s misalignment of personal and

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professional ethics, differences in governing professional codes of ethics, differences in professional ethics from leadership, or personal and professional codes of ethics misalignment to the community's expectations (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016).

### **Implications**

The ethical perspectives of care, critique, justice, and profession must be considered in this turbulent time by all educational professionals, and then changes to educational policy must be driven by educational leaders to better prepare for other calamities that may occur in the future. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2016) argue the professional ethics demand that educational leaders put students at the heart of decision-making. If ethic of profession is properly addressed by educational leaders, then it is likely that the three connected perspectives of ethic of care, ethic of justice, and ethic of critique have taken a priority in the response to the unprecedented school closures. Implications of the ethical perspectives of care, critique, and justice are addressed in the following sections.

#### **Ethic of Critique**

Ethic of critique first requires an examination of privilege and power. "Teachers and administrators alike-uphold a personal belief system and have the capacity to wield power over students" (Rodriguez-Kiino & Peterson, 2014, p. 106) transmitting a dominant culture and further perpetuate a cultural inequality. Amid this global health crisis, educational professional should continuously examine the policies and plans to address at-home instruction to safeguard the students' educational opportunities and to not further perpetuate educational gaps of marginalized student groups. Communication and coordination of providing equitable resources should be readily available from TEA and the ED. All educators should understand FAPE and the legal requirements to provide equitable education for all students within the same time frame. It

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is unacceptable that at-home learning hubs provided learning opportunities for only our nations students who were best positioned to learn independently in homes that were able to provide technology access and parental support. This requires a perspective of ethic of care.

### **Ethic of Care**

Ethic of care requires an understanding of policies and practices that are rooted in equity. A recommendation is that all districts participate in ongoing professional learning regarding equity and cultural responsiveness, providing a foundation for decision-making. In doing so, the best interest of *every* student remains as the focal point, even during unprecedented times.

In alignment with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, basic needs of physiological and safety needs must be met. The USDA in partnership with school districts, provided a quick response to meeting some of the physiological needs but with unemployment rising, it is possible that not all these basic needs were met for students, especially for families with a lower socio-economic status. Districts were quick to respond and help by providing basic needs for students, at least what was in the districts' purview.

The CARES Act did not provide provisions for schools to provide internet connectivity for all students. Consequentially, at-home learning provided educational opportunities for only privileged students. Some districts offered paper packets for at-home learning in lieu of online instruction or as a replacement to online instruction for those without internet connections. Due to lack of parental support and the absence of technology resources to support learning, some students learning gaps may widen. Furthermore, student devices can provide assistive technologies, translation, and online opportunities for educational professionals to support students and parents in compliance with Section 504, Title II, Title VI, and IDEA. Innovative solutions for providing mobile educational broadband through Wi-Fi routers on school buses are



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needed, as with Austin Independent School District's Wi-Fi grant with Kajeet (Kajeet, 2020). Providing technology devices and mobile education broadband would help provide learning assistance to students with learning difficulties. This is a necessary revision to FB(LEGAL) and as such, should be outlined in policy. The U.S. Department of Education, educational advocacy groups, and educational professionals should be abreast of these technologies and advocate for the best interest of all students. It is recommended that until equitable technology is in place, at-home learning should not be expected. This allows time for parents to address how they are working to secure the basic needs for their families.

### **Ethic of Justice**

For the ethic of justice, all policies or expectations from the profession or community must meet the needs of students in an equitable manner, and if not, policies must be amended to promote an equitable education. In the event of other calamities, such as future pandemics, the state and local policies FB(LEGAL) and FB(LOCAL) should have steps of implementation to providing at-home learning that is inclusive of all students. These steps first consider a specified time period to evaluate the ethic of critique and the ethic of care prior to providing at-home learning opportunities. Without this careful pause, equity is lost. This pause would allow time for districts to provide at-home learning with reasonable modifications to avoid discrimination, a requirement to meet the provisions outlined in FB(LEGAL).

Concern for educational gaps must provide responses that are inclusive of all students, requiring educational leaders who are culturally proficient to respond to the academic and social needs of all cultural groups (Terrell, Terrell, Lindsey, & Lindsey, 2018). Therefore, FB(LEGAL) should require annual professional learning on equity. Additionally, a recommended policy

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amendment to FB(LOCAL) should include during unexpected school closures who are essential employees who will ensure the equity of educational opportunities for students are met.

### **Conclusion**

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2016) argued the professional ethics demand that educational leaders put students at the heart of decision-making. The ethic of profession should have educators realize that we do have some control in which to provide an equitable education to all students. First, we have the right to vote, and should exercise this right with intentionally, especially with state elected officials who control educational policy. Secondly, as educators, we should continue to provide advocacy for changes in educational policy. State and local school board policies should be prepared to address how student services and supports provide equal access to educational opportunities, even during health crises. It is not until educational leaders step up and change the paradigm of how learning serves all students needs, even during a health crisis, that we will see a shift in the educational inequities in our country.

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## Appendix

<b>Nondiscrimination</b>	<p>A district shall provide equal opportunities to all individuals within its jurisdiction or geographic boundaries. <i>Education Code 1.002(a)</i></p> <p>No officer or employee of a district shall, when acting or purporting to act in an official capacity, refuse to permit any student to participate in any school program because of the student's race, religion, color, sex, or national origin. <i>Civ. Prac. &amp; Rem. Code 106.001</i></p> <p>A district may not deny services to any individual eligible to participate in its special education program, but it shall provide individuals with disabilities special educational services as authorized by law. <i>Education Code 1.002(b)</i></p>
<b>Federal Funding Recipients</b>	<p>No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination by any district that receives federal financial assistance, on the basis of any of the following protected characteristics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Sex.</li><li>2. Race, color, or national origin.</li><li>3. Disability, or relationship or association with an individual with a disability. [See EHB, EHBA series, and GA]</li><li>4. Age.</li></ol> <p><i>20 U.S.C. 1681 (Title IX); 42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI); 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act); 29 U.S.C. 794 (Section 504); 42 U.S.C. 12132 (Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA]); 42 U.S.C. 6101 et. seq. (Age Discrimination Act of 1975)</i></p>
<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	<p>Sexual harassment of students is discrimination on the basis of sex under Title IX. <i>Franklin v. Gwinnett County Schools</i>, 503 U.S. 60 (1992) [See also DIA and FFH]</p>
<b>Human Rights Coordinator</b>	<p>A district shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX, Section 504, and the ADA. The district shall notify all students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) so designated.</p>
<b>Grievance Procedures</b>	<p>A district shall adopt and publish grievance procedures for prompt and equitable resolution of student complaints alleging discrimination under these statutes. [See FNG]</p> <p><i>34 C.F.R. 106.8 (Title IX), 104.7 (Section 504)</i></p>
<b>Retaliation</b>	<p>A district shall not coerce, intimidate, threaten, retaliate against, or interfere with any person who attempts to assert a right protected</p>

by the above laws or cooperates with investigation and enforcement proceedings under these laws. *34 C.F.R. 100.7(e) (Title VI), 104.61 (Section 504), 106.71 (Title IX)*

**Students with Learning Difficulties**

The Texas Education Agency shall produce and provide to school districts a written explanation of the options and requirements for providing assistance to students who have learning difficulties or who need or may need special education. The explanation must state that a parent is entitled at any time to request an evaluation of the parent's child for special education services under Education Code 29.004 or for aids, accommodations, or services under Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Section 794). Each school year, a district shall provide the written explanation to a parent of each district student by including the explanation in the student handbook or by another means. *Education Code 26.0081(c)*

**Disability Discrimination**

ADA

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a district, or be subjected to discrimination by the district. *42 U.S.C. 12132; 28 C.F.R. 35.130*

Section 504

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. *29 U.S.C. 794(a)*

Definitions

*"Student with a Disability"*

A "student with a disability" is one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the student's major life activities, has a record of having such an impairment, or is being regarded as having such an impairment.

The determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity shall be made without regard to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures, such as medication, medical supplies, low-vision devices (which do not include ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses), prosthetics, hearing aids, mobility devices, oxygen therapy, assistive technology, or learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications.

An impairment that substantially limits one major life activity need not limit other major life activities in order to be considered a disability. An impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.

physical or mental impairment whether or not the impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major life activity. This provision does not apply to impairments that are transitory or minor. A transitory impairment is one with an actual or expected duration of 6 months or less.

*29 U.S.C. 705(20)(B), 42 U.S.C. 12102(1), (3)–(4)*

*“Qualified Individual with a Disability”*

The term “qualified individual with a disability” means an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by a district. *42 U.S.C. 12131(2)*

*“Major Life Activities”*

“Major life activities” include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. “Major life activity” also includes the operation of major bodily functions, including functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, and digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. *42 U.S.C. 12102(2)*

Reasonable Modification

A district shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the district can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity. *28 C.F.R. 35.130(b)(7)*

Direct Threat

“Direct threat” means a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services as provided below. *28 C.F.R. 35.104*

The ADA does not require a district to permit an individual to participate in or benefit from the services, programs, or activities of that district when that individual poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

In determining whether an individual poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, a district must make an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment that relies on current medical knowledge or on the best available objective evidence, to ascertain:

1. The nature, duration, and severity of the risk;

1. Whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures or the provision of auxiliary aids or services will mitigate the risk.

*28 C.F.R. 35.139*

Free Appropriate  
Public Education  
(FAPE)

A district shall provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified student with a disability within the district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the student's disability.

A student with a disability is "qualified" if he or she is between the ages of three and 21, inclusive. *20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(1); 34 C.F.R. 104.3(l)(2)*

An appropriate education is the provision of regular or special education and related services that are:

1. Designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of students who do not have disabilities are met; and
2. Based on adherence to procedures that satisfy federal requirements for educational setting, evaluation and placement, and procedural safeguards, as set forth below.

*34 C.F.R. 104.33(b)*

Implementation of an individualized education program (IEP) under IDEA is one means for providing FAPE. *34 C.F.R. 104.33(b)(2)*

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**Note:** See EHBA series for policies regarding the provision of special education to students with disabilities under IDEA who require special education in order to benefit from a free appropriate public education.

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Educational Setting

A district shall place a student with a disability in the regular educational environment, unless the district demonstrates that education in the regular environment with the use of supplemental aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. *34 C.F.R. 104.34(a)*

In providing or arranging for nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, a district shall ensure that a student with a disability participates with students who do not have disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student with a disability. *34 C.F.R. 104.34(b), 104.37*

Evaluation and  
Placement

A district shall conduct an evaluation of any person who, because of disability, needs or is believed to need special education or related services before taking any action with respect to the initial



placement of the person in regular or special education and any subsequent significant change in placement.

*Evaluation  
Procedures*

A district shall establish standards and procedures for the evaluation and placement which ensure that:

1. Tests and other evaluation materials have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel in conformance with the instructions provided by their producer;
2. Tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient; and
3. Tests are selected and administered so as best to ensure that, when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

*Placement  
Procedures*

In interpreting evaluation data and in making placement decisions, a district shall:

1. Draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social and cultural background, and adaptive behavior;
2. Establish procedures to ensure that information obtained from all such sources is documented and carefully considered;
3. Ensure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options; and
4. Ensure that the placement decision is made in conformity with 34 C.F.R. 104.34.

*Reevaluation*

A district shall establish procedures for periodic reevaluation of students who have been provided special education and related services. A reevaluation procedure consistent with the Education for the Handicapped Act [now IDEA] is one means of meeting this requirement.

*34 C.F.R. 104.35*

<i>Military Dependents</i>	<p>In compliance with the requirements of Section 504, and with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. Sections 12131–12165), the district shall make reasonable accommodations and modifications to address the needs of incoming military dependents with disabilities, subject to an existing Section 504 or Title II Plan, to provide the student with equal access to education. This does not preclude the district from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement of the student. <i>Education Code 162.002 art. V, § C</i>[See FDD]</p>
Procedural Safeguards	<p>A district shall establish a system of procedural safeguards with respect to the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of persons who need or are believed to need special instruction or related services.</p> <p>The system shall include notice, an opportunity for the student's parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with the opportunity for participation by the student's parents or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure. Compliance with the procedural safeguards of IDEA is one means of meeting this requirement. <i>34 C.F.R. 104.36</i></p>
<b>Children Who Are Homeless</b>	<p>A district shall adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless children are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their homeless status. [See FDC]</p>
Liaison	<p>A district shall designate an appropriate staff person, able to carry out the required duties, as the district liaison for homeless children. A district shall inform school personnel, service providers, advocates working with homeless families, parents and guardians of homeless children, and homeless children of the duties of the liaison. [See FFC]</p> <p><i>42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(i), (ii), (g)(6)(B)</i></p>
<b>Religious Freedom</b>	<p>A district may not substantially burden a student's free exercise of religion, unless the burden is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. <i>Civ. Prac. &amp; Rem. Code 110.003</i>[See also DAA and GA]</p>
Adverse Action Prohibited	<p>Notwithstanding any other law, a district may not take any adverse action against any person based wholly or partly on the person's membership in, affiliation with, or contribution, donation, or other support provided to a religious organization. <i>Gov't Code 2400.002</i> [See GA]</p>
<b>Discrimination on the Basis of Sex</b>	<p>No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected</p>

to discrimination by any district receiving federal financial assistance. *20 U.S.C. 1681(a)*

A district shall not provide any course or otherwise carry out any of its educational programs or activities separately on the basis of sex, or require or refuse participation therein on the basis of sex, including health, physical education, industrial, business, vocational, technical, home economics, music, and adult education courses. *34 C.F.R. 106.34*

Separate Facilities	A district may provide separate toilet, locker room, and shower facilities on the basis of sex, but the facilities provided for one sex shall be comparable to the facilities provided for the other sex. <i>34 C.F.R. 106.33</i>
Human Sexuality Classes	Portions of classes in elementary and secondary school that deal primarily with human sexuality may be conducted in separate sessions for boys and girls.
Vocal Music Activities	A district may make requirements based on vocal range or quality that may result in a chorus or choruses of one or predominantly one sex. <i>34 C.F.R. 106.34</i>
Single-Sex Programs	A district shall not, on the basis of sex, exclude any student from admission to an institution of vocational education or any other school or educational unit operated by the district. <i>34 C.F.R. 106.35</i>
Pregnancy and Marital Status	A recipient shall not apply any rule concerning a student's actual or potential parental, family, or marital status that treats students differently on the basis of sex. <i>34 C.F.R. 106.40</i> [See FND]
Physical Education Classes	A district may group students in physical education classes and activities by ability as assessed by objective standards of individual performance developed and applied without regard to sex.
<i>Skills Assessment</i>	Where use of a single standard of measuring skill or progress in physical education classes has an adverse effect on members of one sex, a district shall use appropriate standards that do not have such effect.
<i>Contact Sports</i>	A district may separate students by sex within physical education classes or activities during participation in wrestling, boxing, rugby, ice hockey, football, basketball, and other sports the purpose or major activity of which involves bodily contact. <i>34 C.F.R. 106.34, .43</i>

Athletic Programs

A district shall not discriminate, on the basis of sex, in interscholastic or intramural athletics or provide any such athletics separately on such basis.

*Single-Sex Teams*

A district may operate or sponsor separate teams for members of each sex where selection for such teams is based upon competitive skill or the activity involved is a contact sport. However, where a recipient operates or sponsors a team in a particular sport for members of one sex but not for members of the other sex, and athletic opportunities for members of that sex have previously been limited, members of the excluded sex must be allowed to try-out for the team offered unless the sport involved is a contact sport.

*Equal Athletic Opportunities*

A district that operates or sponsors interscholastic or intramural athletics shall provide equal athletic opportunity for members of both sexes. The following factors shall be considered in determining whether a district provides equal athletic opportunities:

1. Whether the selection of sports and levels of competition effectively accommodate the interests and abilities of members of both sexes;
2. Provision of equipment and supplies;
3. Scheduling of games and practice time;
4. Travel and per diem allowance;
5. Opportunity to receive coaching and academic tutoring;
6. Assignment and compensation of coaches and tutors;
7. Provision of locker rooms and practice and competitive facilities;
8. Provision of medical and training facilities and services;
9. Provision of housing and dining facilities and services; and
10. Publicity.

*34 C.F.R. 106.41*

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Note: The following provisions address equal educational opportunity for all students in accordance with law. For provisions addressing discrimination, harassment, and retaliation involving District students, see FFH.

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**Title IX Coordinator**

The District has designated a Title IX coordinator for students to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended. [See FB(EXHIBIT)]

**ADA / Section 504 Coordinator**

The District has designated an ADA/Section 504 coordinator for students to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), as amended. [See FB(EXHIBIT)]

**Superintendent**

The Superintendent shall serve as coordinator for purposes of District compliance with all other nondiscrimination laws.

**Equal Educational Opportunity**

General Education

The District shall provide necessary services and supports to provide students equal access to educational opportunities. [See EHBC] Certain instructional or other accommodations, including on state-mandated assessments, may be made when necessary, when allowable, and when these accommodations do not modify the rigor or content expectations of a subject, course, or assessment. [See EKB]

Additional Services and Supports

If the District has reason to believe that a student has a disability that may require additional services and supports in order for the student to receive an appropriate education as this term is defined by law, Section 504 and/or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) shall govern the evaluation, services, and supports provided by the District. [See also EHBA series]

[For information regarding dyslexia and related disorders, see EHB.]

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Note: The following provisions address the District's compliance efforts and system of procedural safeguards as required by federal regulations for a student with a disability as defined by Section 504. A report of discrimination or harassment based on a student's disability shall be made in accordance with FFH.

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**Section 504**

Committees

The District shall form Section 504 committees as necessary. The Section 504 coordinator and members of each Section 504

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identifying and providing educational and related services and supports to a student who has a disability that results in a substantial limitation of a major life activity.

Each Section 504 committee shall be composed of a group of persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and the legal requirements regarding least restrictive environment and comparable facilities for students with disabilities.

Referrals	If a teacher, school counselor, administrator, or other District employee has reason to believe that a student may have a disability as defined by Section 504, the District shall evaluate the student. A student may also be referred forevaluation by the student’s parent.
Notice and Consent	The District shall seek written parental consent prior to conducting a formal evaluation. Ordinary observations in the classroom or other school setting shall not require prior parental consent.
Evaluation and Placement	The results of an evaluation shall be considered before any action is taken to place a student with a disability or make a significant change in placement in an instructional program. The Superintendent shall ensure that the District’s procedures for tests and other evaluation materials comply with the minimum requirements of law. In interpreting evaluation data and when making decisions related to necessary services and supports, each Section 504 committee shall carefully consider and document information from a variety of sources in accordance with law.
Review and Reevaluation Procedure	To address the periodic reevaluation requirement of law, the District shall adhere to the reevaluation timelines in the IDEA regulations.  A parent, teacher, or other District employee may request a review of a student’s services and supports at any time, but a formal reevaluation shall generally occur no more frequently than once a year.
Examining Records	A parent shall make any request to review his or her child’s education records to the campus principal or other identified custodian of records. [See FL]
Right to Impartial Hearing	A parent shall be given written notice of the due process right to an impartial hearing if the parent has a concern or complaint about the District’s actions regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability. The impartial hearing shall be conducted by a person who is knowledgeable about Section 504 issues and who is not employed by the District or related to a member of the Board in a degree that would be

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not required to be an attorney. The District and the parent shall be entitled to legal representation at the impartial hearing.

Records Retention

Records specific to identification, evaluation, and placement as these pertain to Section 504 shall be retained by the District in accordance with law and the District's local records retention schedules. [See CPC]